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A few months ago, the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center entered the social networking and media arena, establishing profiles on Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo and Twitter in order to embrace an active online community. Periodically, I spend some time on these sites, reading what our "fans" in the field are discussing when it comes to Army safety.

I've found that our Soldiers, civilians and their Family members are openly sharing their personal beliefs and values on a host of subjects. There was, however, one theme that kept reappearing throughout several postings and comments. That theme was individual responsibility.

A recent message posted on our Facebook page caused me to pause and consider the great insight offered by one of our troops in the field. He wrote, "Individuals have to know that they are owners of their own safety."

In another recent Facebook posting, a former company commander commented on the issue of personal responsibility, noting, "Regardless of the programs we implement, the safety briefings we present or vignettes we tell, the individual Soldier is the only one who can either embrace that information or toss it out."

Every year, the USACR/Safety Center team publishes numerous tools and programs to help keep our Army safe. But these products are of no value if they are not embraced and used by the individual Soldier as part of everyday life.

We all must embrace Army safety and use the tools, programs and lessons learned to protect our most vital resource — our Soldiers — both on and off duty, in combat or home station and off-duty with Family and friends. The five steps of the composite risk management process must be at the heart of every Soldier's "plan," whether that plan is taking them to a local beach or their hometown thousands of miles away.

Though individual responsibility is, by definition, focused on the individual, it also reaps rewards for our entire Army Family. Engaged Leaders who use all the tools available to identify and mitigate risk do make a difference. Likewise, Soldiers and Family members who embrace safety are also a critical component of protecting our Band of Brothers and Sisters.

This team approach to safety is especially important during the high-risk summer season. Tragically, our Army continues to experience an increase in off-duty accidental fatalities during this timeframe. The USACR/Safety Center recently developed the Safe Summer campaign and Off-Duty Safety Awareness Program to ensure Leaders, Soldiers and Families are aware of the off-duty hazards they will face in the upcoming months. You can find these products on our Web site at <https://safety.army.mil>.

I encourage you to remain focused on reducing preventable losses and conserving our combat force. Continue to remain vigilant about safety and apply composite risk management to all your daily activities, both on and off the battlefield. I thank you for all you do for our nation and for making safety a top priority in all your activities.

Army Safe Is Army Strong!

WILLIAM T. WOLF
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding